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Some history of Bossburg

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Cc: James_Retzer

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From: Ray_DePuydt@nps.gov
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History: This message has been replied to and forwarded.

1 attachment



bossburg wrightup.docx

Jim Retzer, who works here put this together for you. If you want more information we could contact some other people in the area. Let me know what information you are looking for.

(See attached file: bossburg wrightup.docx)

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Bossburg

Bossburg started as a mining camp for the Young America Mine. In 1885 prospectors located several mines in the area of Bossburg including the Young America, Bonanza, and Old Dominion. The Young America mine was one of the first mines to produce lead, zinc, and silver in the Colville-Northport area. The mine was operated by a number of different companies and leaseholders between 1885 and 1954. The earliest documented operator of the mine was Young America Cliff Consolidated Mining Co. who operated the mine from 1897 to 1905. Early production records for the Young American mine prior to 1905 are unknown but the records for the period 1905 to 1954 show cumulative production of 13,389 tons of raw ore containing approximately 940,000 pounds of lead, 771,000 pounds of zinc, 50 ounces of gold and 70,000 ounces of silver (Fulkerson and Kingston, 1958). All but 561 tons of the reported production was mined in the years 1945 through 1954.

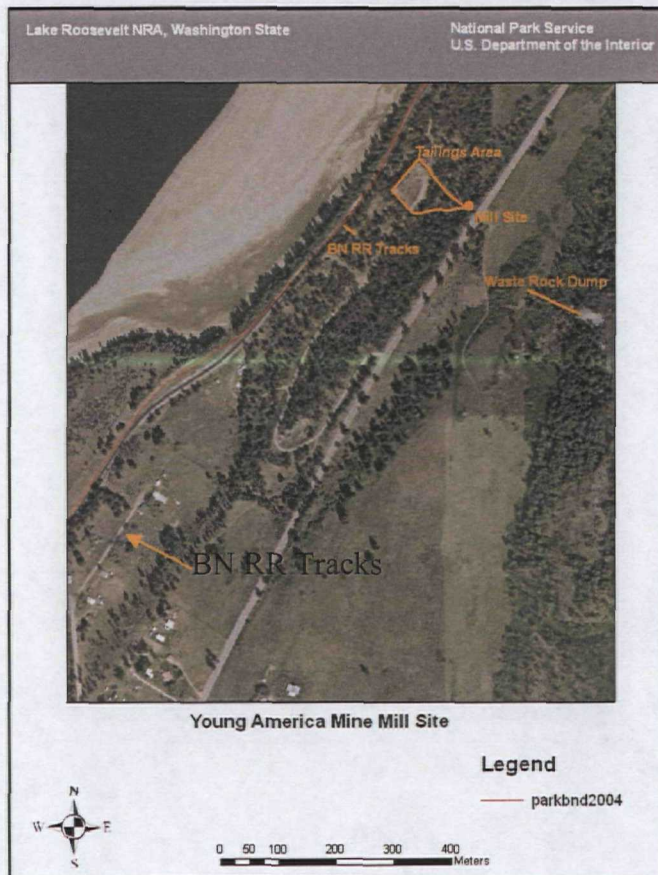
On May 1, 1893 the area of Bossburg was platted as a town by the Consolidated Bonanza Mining & Smelting Company as Millington. Later it became a mining camp related to the Young America Mine and became known as Young America. The mining operation was profitable enough to warrant opening a wagon road to the smelter at Colville. The wagon road also ran north to the Little Dalles and was utilized to transport Canadian ore freighted to the Little Dalles by river steamers. During 1889 the mines increased production lead to the opening of a mill near town. In 1890 the Spokane Falls and Northern railroad built track from Colville, Washington through the Bossburg area to the river steamers landing at Little Dalles.


By 1892 the camps population had grown to 800 people and was renamed Bossburg in honor of C. S. Boss and John Bergh two influential citizens in the town. Chester S. Boss came west from Michigan after fighting in both the Civil and the Indian Wars. He was a storekeeper and the first postmaster as well as a member of the first school board. John Bergh was an influential pioneer and a clerk for the school board. Also in 1892 a two-story school was built in the town forming school district #52. This school was utilized until a new combined elementary and high school was constructed in 1910 on the bench east of town. When Coulee Dam was built and the waters of the Columbia River were backed up forming Lake Roosevelt the west part of Bossburg was flood but the bench on the east side of town was left. The Bossburg School remained in operation until 1956 when it was annexed by the Consolidated Marcus district #50. (Alpha Naff, *The Last Bell*)

In 1893, due to the drop in silver prices, mining operations slowed and financial issues arose. In a futile effort to keep the town alive, a ferry system across the Columbia River was established, and a sawmill was built for lumber operations. The *Bossburg Journal* newspapers began operation in 1893 and ran until 1910. In 1910 another newspaper was started in Bossburg called the *Bossburg Herald* but only lasted for one year. The first cable ferry at Bossburg was started in 1898 by John Argall. This ferry, known as the Young America Landing, shuttled prospectors and freight wagons, bound for mining fields in British Columbia, across the Columbia River. By 1912, according to the 1911-1912 Polk Guide, the town of Bossburg consisted of a general store, concrete company, publisher, two meat markets, blacksmith shop, and a newspaper – the *Bossburg Herald* (which was going out of business), drug store, saloon, two general merchandise

stores, and a hardware store. At this time the ferry here was operated by E. T. Ramser who brought his ferry down from the Ryan crossing. Ferry services ran from Bossburg until 1940.

The mine is located $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north of Bossburg and the mill site is located on private property below and adjacent to the west shoulder of SR 25 directly west of the mine.



Waste Rock 

The following is from the Washington State Division of Geology's *Inactive and Abandoned Mine Lands – Young America Mine*.

Gregor Mines, Inc., built a flotation mill of about 100-tpd capacity in the late 1940s (Orlob, 1950). Concrete footings and ruins of the mill lie adjacent to the west shoulder of SR 25 below the mine site. He reported, "Tailings from the mill have, in the past, been discharged onto a flat between the mill and a railroad embankment along the [Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake] shore. A culvert beneath the railroad would normally carry the overflow from the pond into the lake. Along the lake shore below the culvert there is a large deposit of white sludge . . . indicating that the dikes were not properly maintained during mill operations." We found the ravine under the railroad tracks, but the culvert appears to have been buried, and the deposit of white sludge is no longer visible.

1958 Fulkerson, F. B.; Kingston, G. A., Mine production of gold, silver, copper, lead, and zinc in Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties, Wash., 1902–56; Annual totals by mines, districts, and counties: U.S. Bureau of Mines Information Circular 7872, 51 p.

2003 Kirk, Ruth and Carmela Alexander *Exploring Washington's Past: A Road Guide To History*, University of Washington Press

2005 Naff, Alpha, *The Last Bell*, Northeast Washington Genealogical Society, Colville, Washington

1950 Orlob, G. T.; Saxton, W. J., *A preliminary survey of the sources of mining and mill waste pollution in the upper Columbia River basin and Lake Roosevelt*: Washington Pollution Control Commission, 22 p.

1974 Ruby, Robert H. and John A. Brown, *Ferryboats on the Columbia River*, Superior Publishing Company, Seattle, Washington.

2008 Wolf, Fritz E. and Donald T. McKay Jr, Matthew I. Brookshier, David K. Norman *Inactive and Abandoned Mine Lands – Young America Mine*, Bossburg Mining district, Stevens County, Washington. Washington Division of Geology and Earth Resources, Olympia, Washington